Overview of the

Academic Performance Index School Base Reports for 2004

The Academic Performance Index (API) was established by California's Public Schools Accountability Act (PSAA) of 1999. The API is a numeric index (or scale) that reflects the growth of a school's academic performance based on annual results of statewide testing.

Every public school (kindergarten through grade twelve) receives two API reports during the year. The first report, the API Base, shows the school's current level of academic performance and sets goals (or targets) for growth. The second report, the API growth, shows how well those targets were met.

This overview provides a brief description of how the API is determined and targets are set, the API reporting cycle, what the API Base report includes, and the API ranks.

How API is Determined

The 2004 API Base report, released in March 2005, is calculated with results of the 2004 Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program and the 2004 *California High School Exit Examination* (*CAHSEE*). The STAR Program includes the *California Standards Tests* (*CSTs*), the *California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey* (*CAT/6 Survey*), and the *California Alternate Performance Assessment* (*CAPA*). The *CAPA* is a standards-based test for students with significant cognitive disabilities, who are unable to take the *CSTs* even with modifications. Results used to calculate the API are called, "indicators." The following table shows the test indicators for the 2004 API Base. Indicators new to the API are shown in bold.

Test Indicators Used in the 2004 API Base

2004 Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program

- *California Standards Tests (CSTs)*
  - The *California English-Language Arts Standards Test* (*CST in ELA*) was included for all grade levels assessed: grades two through eleven, including a writing assessment at grades four and seven.
  - The *California Mathematics Standards Test* (*CST* in mathematics) was included for all grade levels assessed: grades two through seven, and grades eight through eleven for the following course-specific tests:
    - General mathematics (grades eight and nine only)
    - Algebra I
    - Geometry
    - Algebra II
    - Integrated mathematics 1, 2, or 3
    - High School Summative Mathematics Test
  - The *California History-Social Science Standards Test* (*CST* in history-social science) was included for **grade eight (NEW)**, ten (world history), and eleven (U.S. history).
  - The *California Science Standards Test* (*CST* in science) was included for **grade five (NEW)** and for grades nine through eleven for the following course-specific tests:
    - Biology/life sciences
    - Earth science
    - Chemistry
    - Physics
    - Integrated/coordinated science 1, 2, 3, or 4

- *California Alternate Performance Assessment* (*CAPA*)
  - The *California Alternate Performance Assessment* (*CAPA*) in English-language arts and mathematics was included for grades two through eleven. This *CAPA* is based on a subset of state academic standards.

- Norm-referenced test (NRT)
  - The *California Achievement Test, Sixth Edition Survey* (*CAT/6 Survey*), was included for all content areas at **grades three and seven only (NEW)**. The content areas for grades three and seven included reading, language, spelling, and mathematics.

2004 California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE)

- The *California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE)*, administered in February and March 2004 (and May for make ups), was included for grade ten. The *CAHSEE* covers English-language arts and mathematics.

API Measures Growth and Compares Performance

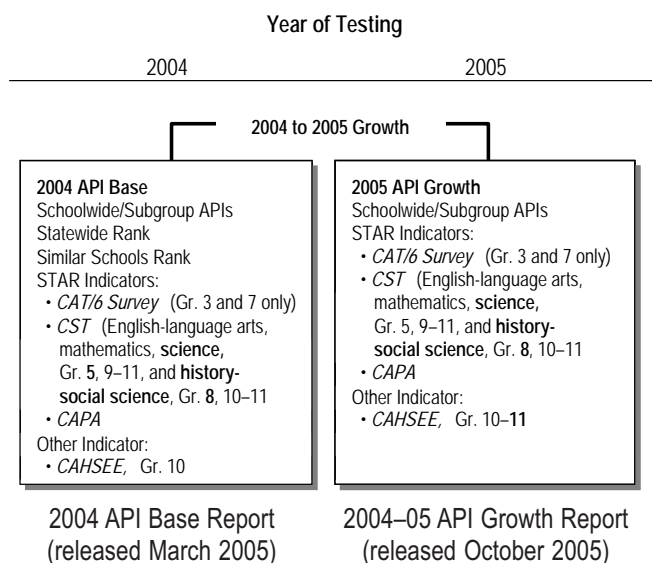Under state law, the API has two major purposes:
- To measure growth of a school's academic performance from one year to the next
- To rank schools annually based on their performance level

API rankings must be calculated with the same set of indicators. This means that results of the same tests must be used to set the base and determine the level of growth. As new test indicators become available, they are added to the API calculations. This API, including continuing and new indicators, becomes the baseline against which to compare the next year's API.

In order to meet state requirements and phase-in new indicators, the API is reported as an "API Base" and an "API Growth." The API Base, released after the beginning of each calendar year, includes continuing and new indicators based on spring statewide test results. It serves as the baseline for the API Growth that is released in the fall. The API Growth is calculated in exactly the same fashion and with the same indicators as the API Base but is based on test results from the following year. It reports whether schools met their API growth targets. "Growth in the API" refers to the increase or decrease in the API score from the API Base to the API Growth.

2004–05 API Reporting Cycle

APIs are reported according to their "API reporting cycle." This includes the API Base and API Growth from one testing year to the next. For example, the 2004–05 API reporting cycle, as shown below, includes the 2004 API Base and the 2005 API Growth. Indicators new to the API are shown in bold.

Year of Testing

2004	2005

2004 to 2005 Growth

2004 API Base
Schoolwide/Subgroup APIs
Statewide Rank
Similar Schools Rank
STAR Indicators:
 • *CAT/6 Survey* (Gr. 3 and 7 only)
 • *CST* (English-language arts, mathematics, **science**, Gr. **5**, 9–11, and **history-social science**, Gr. **8**, 10–11
 • *CAPA*
Other Indicator:
 • *CAHSEE,* Gr. 10

2005 API Growth
Schoolwide/Subgroup APIs
STAR Indicators:
 • *CAT/6 Survey* (Gr. 3 and 7 only)
 • *CST* (English-language arts, mathematics, **science**, Gr. 5, 9–11, and **history-social science**, Gr. **8**, 10–11
 • *CAPA*
Other Indicator:
 • *CAHSEE,* Gr. 10–**11**

2004 API Base Report
(released March 2005)

2004–05 API Growth Report
(released October 2005)

The 2004 API Base report, released in March 2005, is calculated from results of spring 2004 statewide testing.

The 2004 API Base Report will include:
- Number of Students Included in the API Base
- 2004 API Base
- 2004 Statewide Rank
- 2004 Similar Schools Rank
- 2004–05 Growth Target
- 2005 API Target (2004 API Base + 2004–05 Growth Target)
- List of Similar Schools
- School Demographic Characteristics
- School Content Area Weights

In October 2005, the 2005 API Growth, based on the results of spring 2005 statewide testing, will be released in the 2004–05 API Growth report.
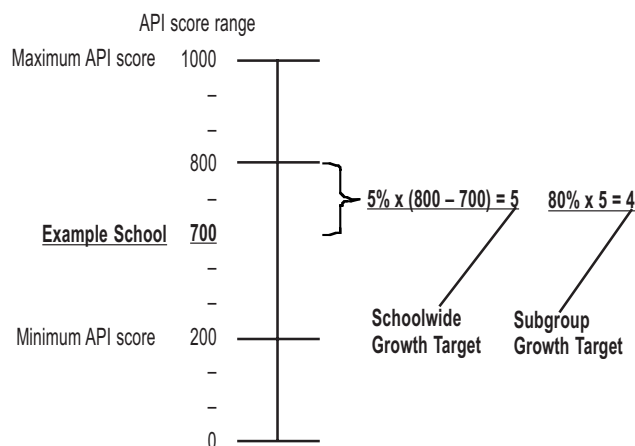
The 2004–05 API Growth Report will include:
- STAR 2005 Percent Tested
- Number of Students Included in the 2005 API Growth
- 2005 API Growth
- 2004 API Base
- 2004–05 Growth Target
- 2004–05 Growth (2005 API Growth – 2004 API Base)
- Met Growth Target
  - Schoolwide
  - Comparable Improvement (Subgroups)
  - Both Schoolwide and Comparable Improvement
- Awards Eligible
- Similar Schools Median 2005 API Growth
- Similar Schools Median 2004 API Base
- School Demographic Characteristics
- School Content Area Weights

API Sets Academic Growth Targets

Academic growth targets are set for each school as a whole and for each numerically significant subgroup in the school. The API ranges from a low of 200 for a high of 1000, with an API score of 800 as the statewide performance target. The annual growth target for a school is five percent of the distance between a school's API Base and the statewide performance target of 800. For any school with an API below 800, the minimum growth target is at least one point. Any school with an API of 800 or more must maintain an API of at least 800 in order to meet its growth target. In most cases, the growth target for each numerically significant subgroup is 80 percent of the schoolwide growth target.

Example of API Growth Targets for a School and its Subgroups

API score range

Maximum API score	1000
	800
Example School	**700**
Minimum API score	200
	0

5% x (800 – 700) = 5

80% x 5 = 4

Schoolwide Growth Target

Subgroup Growth Target

Note: Growth targets are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Comparable Improvement in Subgroups

To meet all state API growth target requirements, each numerically significant subgroup in a school must meet "comparable improvement." For the 2004 API Base, the "comparable improvement" requirement only applies to numerically significant ethnic and socioeconomically disadvantaged student subgroups.

Subgroup Descriptions

Subgroups used in the 2004 API Base Calculations include:
- African American or Black (not of Hispanic origin)
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Filipino
- Hispanic or Latino
- Pacific Islander
- White (not of Hispanic origin)
- Socioeconomically Disadvantaged

"Socioeconomically disadvantaged" is defined as:
- A student whose parents both have not received a high school diploma
OR
- A student who participates in the free or reduced-price lunch program, also known as the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)

For a subgroup to be "numerically significant," it must have:
- 100 or more students with valid STAR scores
OR
- 50 or more students with valid STAR scores who make up at least 15 percent of the total valid STAR scores

API Ranks School Performance

API decile ranks are listed in the API Base reports but are not in the API Growth reports. For API ranks, schools are ranked in ten categories of equal size, called deciles, from one (lowest) to ten (highest). A school's API Base rank compares that school to schools statewide and to schools with similar demographic characteristics. (School districts, special education centers, and schools in the Alternative Schools Accountability Model [ASAM] receive APIs but do not receive API ranks.)

Schools' API scores are ranked separately within school type: elementary, middle, and high schools. For each of the three categories, schools' API scores (except small schools) are first sorted from lowest to highest statewide to produce the statewide ranks. A second decile ranking compares each school's API score to those of 100 other schools that have "similar characteristics." This second process produces the similar schools ranks.

Statewide API Ranks Compared with Similar Schools API Ranks

Statewide Ranks	Similar Schools Ranks
■ Calculated separately by school type (elementary, middle, high school)	■ Calculated separately by school type (elementary, middle, high school)
■ School's API compared to all other schools in the state	■ School's API compared to 100 other schools with similar demographic characteristics

How the API Is Used

API scores are used to meet state and federal requirements. Under state PSAA requirements, if a school meets certain participation and growth criteria, it may be eligible to receive monetary awards if funding is available. That school also may be eligible to become a California Distinguished School. Currently, no funding is appropriated in the budget for monetary awards. If a school does not meet or exceed its growth targets and is ranked in the bottom half of the statewide distribution of the API Base, it may be identified for participation in an interventions program. Under federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements, a school must meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements.

For More Information

Parents/guardians and students should direct their questions about the API or the PSAA or plans for improving the school's academic performance to the principal or other school administrators. Further information about the PSAA and API can be found on the CDE Web site at *http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ap*.